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HIGH-RISE FIRE-FIGHTING, RESCUE AND CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

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Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to elevators on rails on the outside of a building and more particularly to two elevators on such rails with a corridor attached between them to act as a moveable platform for fire fighting, emergency rescue, building construction and building maintenance.

Description of the Related Art

Some buildings have elevators on the outside of the building, which offers a nice view as the elevator ascends and descends the side of the building. These are standard elevators and are not to be used during fires. The elevators have cables and are enclosed within the structure of the building to protect the elevator parts. There is usually a glass enclosure for the elevator so that people in the elevator can look out through the side of

1 the building. These elevators are not available for removing large numbers of people
2 from a building during a fire and are not useful for fighting fires or performing
3 maintenance or construction work on the building.

4 There are window-washing platforms that use ropes on either side of the platform
5 to support the platform as it travels up and down the side of the building. The ropes are
6 spooled on a barrel, which is turned by an electric motor, which can be operated by
7 someone on the platform.

8 There are no devices for spanning the entire face of a building, which can be
9 raised and lowered to reach any point on the face of the building and can be used to fire
10 fighting, emergency rescue, building maintenance or window washing.

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12 **Summary of the Invention**

13 A pair of elevators riding on rails on the face of a building have a platform
14 extending between them for accessing any point on the face of a building as the elevators
15 are raised and lowered in unison. The platform can support a corridor such that people
16 can enter the corridor and either walk therethrough to an adjacent corridor or be
17 transported up or down in the corridor or a connecting outside elevator for emergency
18 rescue operations. Pairs of elevators on each face of the building can be raised and
19 lowered in cooperation with each other or individually to effect rescues. Other elevators
20 or elevators with cranes thereon can also be used in conjunction with the pairs of
21 elevators with a platform and corridor thereon for rescue, fire-fighting or building
22 construction or maintenance.

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Objects of the Invention

It is an object of the invention to provide access to the entire outside face of a building.

It is an object of the invention to transport large numbers of people to safety in a corridor traveling on the face of a building.

It is an object of the invention to coordinate the movement of the platforms on the faces of a building with each other and other elevators for rescues and other functions.

It is an object of the invention to provide a platform across the face of a building for fire fighting.

It is an object of the invention to provide a platform across the face of a building for use in building construction and building maintenance.

Other objects, advantages and novel features of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 shows two faces of a building equipped with a corridor extending between two elevator on the outside of a building, plus an elevator cab, and an elevator with crane, used during a fire.

Fig. 2 shows a front view of the side of a building equipped with rails on the outside of the building and having two elevators supporting a corridor.

Fig. 3 a front cross sectional view of a portion of a corridor supported by an elevator on the face of a building.

1 Fig. 4 shows a top view of elevators supporting corridors at the corner of a building
2 showing how the corridors interact.
3 Fig. 5 shows a top view of the elevator connected to a rail on the outside surface of a
4 building and a portion of the corridor on the elevator.
5 Fig. 6 shows a side view of the elevator connected to a rail on the outside surface of a
6 building and a portion of the corridor on the elevator.
7 Fig. 7 shows a side view of the base of a building having an elevator with a crane and an
8 elevator on a rail attached to the side of a building.

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10 **Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

11 In high-rise buildings it is difficult to gain access to the face of the building from
12 the outside on the upper floors. It is particularly necessary to access the face of the
13 buildings during fires such that fire fighters can extinguish the fire and to rescue people
14 on the upper floors.

15 In a prior filed application, serial number 10/205,981 entitled High-Rise Fire
16 Fighting Rescue and Construction Equipment filed July 26, 2002, which is attached
17 hereto and incorporated herein by reference, the applicants have shown how to attach an
18 mobile elevator from an emergence vehicle to a building for riding up and down rails
19 secured to the outside of a building. The elevator has a crane thereon for extending a cab
20 to any point on the face of the building for fire fighting and for rescuing people in the
21 building.

22 The applicants have also filed application serial number 10/334,023 entitled High-
23 Rise Fire Fighting Rescue and Construction Equipment filed December 30, 2002, which

1 is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, which is similar to serial number
2 10/205,981, however the newer application shows the use of cables to lift and lower the
3 elevator on the rails attached to the outside of the building. The cables allow for the
4 elevator cab to be lighter since the electric motors for propelling the elevator can be
5 moved to the building to operate the cables rather than being in the elevator.

6 The applicants have also filed application serial number 10/431946 entitled High-
7 Rise Fire Fighting Rescue and Construction Equipment filed May 5, 2003, which is
8 attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, which adds a second elevator
9 running on the rail to be used in conjunction with the elevator and crane to increase the
10 transportation capacity during an emergency such that more people can be rescued in a
11 shortened time frame.

12 The applicants herein add another feature to the elevator system for the outside of
13 a building which can be used in conjunction with the previously disclosed inventions to
14 again increase the number of people who can be rescued and provide for better access to
15 the face of the building for use during emergencies of for building construction or
16 maintenance.

17 As Fig. 1 shows there is a building 5, which is on fire. In order to provide the
18 building with fire fighting and rescue services the building is provided with rails 4 on the
19 face of building 5. The rails 4 support elevators 3 which are operated in unison to support
20 a corridor 24 therebetween. The corridor 24 has a large floor space for carrying a large
21 number of people therein. The corridor 24 can be lifted or lowered to the floor needed to
22 rescue people. People can then access the corridor 24 by using emergency doors 15 on
23 the building, which are opposite doors 46 in the corridor 24 to admit people. People can

1 also access the corridor 24 through doors 43 opposite windows 16 on building 5.
2 Alternatively people can access the top of the scaffold 28 on top of corridor 24 at any
3 point along the face of the building. A railing 51 is provided around the scaffold 28 for
4 safety. A ladder 34 and trap door 33 allow people to transfer from the scaffold 28 to the
5 corridor 24.

6 The corridor 24 can be lowered to the ground and people can then leave the
7 corridor 24 through doors 47. Alternatively the corridor 24 can remain in position at one
8 floor and elevator 203 can be used to dock with the corridor and people can transfer from
9 the corridor 24 to the elevator 203 by accessing trap door 40 on the floor of the corridor
10 24 and through opening 41 and stairway 42 in truss 26 and through trap door 240 on the
11 top of elevator 203.

12 The corridor 24 extends between the two elevators 3 on either side of the building
13 5 in the embodiment shown, however there can be three or more elevators if the face of
14 the building is longer with corridors between all the elevators.

15 The elevators 3 also have a corner corridor portion 25 extending to the corner of
16 the building such that two such corner corridor portions 25 on adjacent corners of the
17 building 5 will meet at a 45-degree angle to form adjacent walls 145 with sliding doors
18 44 so that people can escape around the corner of a building. Assuming there is a fire
19 blocking passage of a corridor 24 the corridor 24 can be parked at a floor to rescue people
20 who can then move to an adjacent corridor 24 around the corner through corner corridor
21 portions 25. People can also use the scaffold 28 on top of the corridor 24 and on top of
22 the corner corridor portion 25 to be transported to safety or can transfer to the adjacent
23 scaffold 28 by passing through gates 45. The people can then ride down to safety in the

1 second corridor 24 or on the second scaffold 28 or reenter the building on a side away
2 from the fire and use internal building stairs to escape the building.

3 The corridors 24 and corner corridor portions 25 can have inside and outside
4 fireproof walls, and a fireproof ceiling and floor to protect the people inside. Refractory
5 glass windows 27 in the corridors 24 help protect the passengers while letting them see
6 out of the corridor 24 and let light into the corridor 24. The corridors 24 are supported by
7 trusses 26 for a lightweight strong structure. The trusses 26 have rotating connection units
8 31 for pivotally attaching the truss to the elevator 3. The connections of the corridor 24 to
9 the elevator 3 have moving metallic bridges 35 and corrugated elastic sheaths 30 to
10 bridge the gap between the corridor 24 and the elevator 3. An elastic fence section 29
11 connects railing 51 to the upper portion 59 of elevator 3. Doors 36 with windows 27 in
12 elevator 3 can be opened to allow people access to the corridor 24 or the corner corridor
13 portions 25 from the elevator.

14 The lower portion 49 of elevator 3 is the passenger cabin the upper portion 59
15 holds fire suppressing foam 32 and batteries 111 for powering lights 38 for illumination,
16 operation of doors, supplying power to the controls 37, and supplying power at jacks 39.
17 Hose connections 69 are for connecting a hose for spraying fire suppressant foam from
18 containers 32 on the fire.

19 The building 5 has rails 4 attached to the outside face. The rails 4 are preferably
20 recessed into a groove 12 in the building surface for protection against the elements and
21 are H shaped. The rails 4 have guide slots 7 for receiving thrust wheels 6 on the elevator,
22 which stabilize the elevator on the rails 4. The rails 4 have teeth 70 for engaging

1 cogwheels 8, turned by drive units 11, which are preferably electric motors. The drive
2 units 11 raise lower or stop the elevators 3, 103 and 203.

3 The rails 4 have heat resistant sections 14 at intervals to absorb changes in the
4 length of the rails due to thermal expansion or contraction.

5 The corridors 24 with the scaffolding 28 on top can be used to carry firemen and
6 their equipment to the floors needed to fight the fire. The fire can also be fought from the
7 scaffold 28 or the corridor 24.

8 The elevators 3 with the corridors 25 therebetween can be stored at the top of the
9 building 5 in hangers 23 to hide them from view, or they can be stored on the ground,
10 underground, or anyplace along the face of the building.

11 The fire can be fought by use of elevator 103 having a crane 104 thereon. The
12 crane supports and moves a pod 105 which can be used for rescuing people and
13 transporting them to either a safe place on the building, the corridor 24 or scaffold 28,
14 elevator 203 or the ground. The pod 105 can also be used to fight the fire by use of nozzle
15 13 used for spraying water or fire represent chemicals or foam on the fire. The pod 105
16 can also be used during construction or building maintenance to access points on the face
17 of the building or the roof. The pod 105 in the embodiments shown is supported by the
18 crane 104 from above such that the pod can be set on the roof of the building 5 on the
19 ground on the scaffolding 28 or on top of elevator 203.

20 Elevator 203 can be used to transport people from any floor of the building 5 to
21 the ground or to bring fire fighters, workers or equipment to floors where needed.

22 Elevators 103 and 203 have the same wheels 6 and cogwheels 8 and drive units
23 11 as elevators 3 to raise and lower themselves on rails 4.

1 Elevator 103 can be stored underground at a first level 19 below the ground such
2 as in the building garage. A ladder 21 or other structure can be used to service the
3 elevator 103 or the crane 104 when stored at first level 19.

4 Elevator 203 can be stored underground at second level 20 and have a ladder 21
5 or other structure used for servicing elevator 203.

6 When any of the elevators 3, 103, 203 are stored underground level the elevators
7 may have a fence 22 around the opening or vertical slot 17 in the ground adjacent the
8 building for safety. Alternatively a sliding roof 18 may be used to store the elevators
9 underground and out of the elements.

10 If the corridor 24 is positioned at ground level a stair 48 or other structure may be
11 used for maintenance or to provide access the scaffold 28 or door 47.

12 The elevators 3, 103 and 203 may be attached to the building on the same rails 4
13 in any order, or they may be on separate rails to allow for the elevators 103, 203 to pass
14 one another.

15 In case of a fire or other emergency the corridor 24 can be lowered from the top
16 and the elevators 103 and 203 can be raised to rescue people or deliver firefighters rescue
17 workers and equipment to anyplace on the outside face of the building. With proper
18 positioning and coordinated use of the corridors 24 with scaffolds 28, the elevator 203
19 and the elevator 103 with a crane 104 and pod 105. Fires can be put out and people
20 rescued in an efficient manner while outside of the zone of the danger inside of the
21 building. The same corridors 24, scaffold 28, elevator 203 and elevator 103 with crane
22 104 and pod 105 can be used for building construction and maintenance such as window
23 washing.

1 The corridor 24 may be used alone or in conjunction with elevators 103 and 203.

2 Obviously, many modifications and variations of the present invention are
3 possible in light of the above teachings. It is therefore to be understood that, within the
4 scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as
5 specifically described.

6 What is claimed is:

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